

LETTERS FROM BROTHER BILL 'VARSITY SUB.



TO TAD, CAPTAIN
OF THE BEECHVILLE
HIGH SCHOOL ELEVEN



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"FOR LONG PASSES HOLD THE BALL IN THE PALM OF
THE HAND, WITH THE FINGERS AGAINST THE
LACINGS."

LETTERS
FROM BROTHER BILL
'VARSITY SUB

TO TAD, CAPTAIN OF THE BEECHVILLE
HIGH SCHOOL ELEVEN

BY
WALTER KELLOGG TOWERS

ASSISTANT EDITOR OF "THE AMERICAN BOY"

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LETTERS FROM BROTHER BILL— 'VARSITY SUB

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

I'm back, sound, snug, and also sleepy after a long morning on the train and a busy afternoon getting settled. I'm in the same old place and that pirate of a drayman having delivered my trunk, junk is strewn thick about the rooms and all looks familiar. Of course, I'm alone, and will be for three weeks, as "Chubb" isn't due until the more-or-less-beloved faculty summons us to toil within these collegiate halls.

Tad, I'm going to make the 'Varsity! Now, that's a secret. Nobody knows it, not even the coach. Once off the train I made straight for the field and hustled out on the gridiron, deserted just then, for it was only a bit past noon.

The turf was firm, close-cropped and smooth, the goal posts stretched white against the sky and the air came clear and fresh. I thought of the day less than three months away, when those empty stands would be filled with twenty-five thousand roaring partisans and the big red eleven would have come out of the East seeking our scalps. I thought of how it would feel to stand in place as 'Varsity left tackle, and I even marked the spot where I would stand for the kick-off. Then the chimes rang back on the campus, and I thought of my university, and what it all meant and what titanic labors I would undertake for her if the chance but came. I seemed inspired. My lungs filled, I rose on tiptoe, stretched my arms and cried aloud:

"Bill, you can do it."

"What?" came a voice.

And I looked around and there was Bradley, the 'Varsity captain, grinning at me.

I just gulped, and finally found my voice. "I guess I was day dreaming," I said, and stood there looking foolish.

"Down for football?" he queried, and I answered "Yes" quick enough, glad he'd changed the subject.

"Played a tackle with the All-Fresh last year, didn't you?" he asked, and I nodded.

"What do you weigh?" was his next question.

"Hundred and eighty on the hay scales just before I left," I told him. "Guess I'll make a hundred and seventy-two stripped."

"They'll take a lot of pounds off us running us up and down this lot before we ever see a game," Bradley remarked. "But if you've been farming most of yours is muscle and maybe it'll stay. Glad you're fit. Be out early to-morrow, and come up to my room any time. So long," he called as he went into the field house.

Seriously, though, Tad, I'll have to move a few if I do land a 'Varsity letter this year. Bellamy and Snow, who played the regular tackles last year, are both coming back, so it doesn't look overly bright for your big brother. But I sure am going to do every honest thing I can to make good. I'm going to work, and study and think—get as tough a body as clean living and hard practice will give me and try to learn all they tell me; and they say that's what makes football players. It sure is going to be a great year here, with a splendid schedule, a captain like Bradley and The Old Fox—finest of them all—to coach us.

But, Tad, I haven't forgotten Beechville High, and I'm not going to. I'm just as anxious to see her win as I was when I played, —more, now that you're captain. I don't know how much of a correspondence coach I'll make, but I'll keep my promise and do my

best to write you of what I learn about football and what happens to me on the 'Varsity squad.

Mayhap you'll lead Beechville to a County Pennant. Mayhap I'll make the 'Varsity. Who knows? At least we'll do our little best.

Your brother,

BILL.

P. S.—Keep on kicking that football every day.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

To hear Andy talk he's going to make iron men of us; and I guess it would be a good thing both for our own sakes and the team's if we were iron men. If anybody can make a squad fit I guess Andy's the man, for he's been training athletes for more years than I am old and they say he's one of the best in the business.

There were about forty out for the first practice and Andy read us a lecture on Condition with a very large C. If you believe Andy, condition is what counts in football. The coaches have a good deal to say about speed and brains,—but you don't hear much about weight. Mere beef doesn't count for much. Whatever the relative importance of these three essentials, condition is the one we hear about first, and perfect condition is the

thing to strive for first. If a man or boy isn't physically fit he shouldn't play football, and even if he's foolish enough to risk his neck he wouldn't amount to much as a player. The serious accidents that are charged to football happen because players participate who haven't prepared for so strenuous a sport. You must toughen your body, Tad, by constant, strenuous exercise, and see to it that the other players on the Beechville team do the same. Get the body in shape to stand the pounding and you can play your way clear through the hardest game and come out sound. It's in the big college games where the play is fiercest, yet the serious injuries to college players are few, indeed. It's because the college coaches and trainers *make* their players get into condition.

The secret of condition is work,—hard work, early work, late work, and then more work. Just at present football means work

to us,—grinding work. I thought I was fit already, but I discovered I'd only started before that first practice was over. I thought they worked me on the All-Fresh; but the 'Varsity! It's a case of drive, drive, drive, with a coach seemingly always on your heels yelling "faster," "harder."

No sooner were we in suits than they divided us into squads of from five to eight or nine. Each squad was furnished with a ball and one man would pass it from center position. Linemen would line up beside the center; or, if there were too few, all would pose as backs. No signals were called, the man at quarter simply shouting directions, "Full through center," and the like. Up the field we tore and then back again, and when our lungs seemed ready to split we would pause a moment only to have a coach descend upon us with savage orders to keep moving. We'd pass the ball around the circle in the

moments when our lungs were catching up; but if we paused more than a minute or so we'd have The Old Fox bellowing at us across the field. His eyes seem to be everywhere, and the man who loafa gets a tongue-lashing he won't soon forget. This is no place for a son of rest. A lazy man either has to get cured of being lazy or he'll be cured of trying to play football on this squad.

Constant work is the only way to build up a team. Start hard, keep going hard, and weed out the loafers. Of course, we were only kept at it a couple of hours the first day, but the dose keeps getting longer and longer.

Another thing to practice in the short periods of pause is falling on the ball. Every player should know how to fall on the ball. Many are the games in which a recovered fumble turns the tide. Of course, an end must be able to fall on the ball. But many are the times when an active tackle, guard or

back will be close to a fumble, and if he isn't on the ball instantly the other fellow will be and the opportunity lost to him and his team. Drop on a ball with your thigh on one side of it and your body on the other with the ball in the angle between. Drop your body over it and close it in with your arms and nobody can ever get it away from you.

Start two men for the ball thrown along the ground. Then it's a case of speed in reaching it first, just as it will be in a game, and if the man who loses the race gets it away from the man who first dropped on it you'll know that it wasn't held right. Learn to drop on the ball instantly, and learn to drop on it for keeps. You're not a football player until you know how.

Remember, Tad, that condition counts. It prevents accidents and it wins games. I know that it's natural for every team without a good coach to loaf and potter about instead of set-

tlung down and driving from one end of the field to the other hour after hour, day in and day out. But the secret of success is in keeping everlastingly at it.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

There are over fifty out for the team now, and the first day of college nearly two weeks away. The Old Fox and his four assistant coaches are having their hands full, but they keep us all moving. Andy has two husky rubbers for his satellites, and after the run that tops off the practice, and the cold shower, sore muscles and bruises get a thorough massaging. You'd do well to get a big bottle of witch hazel, Tad, and encourage the other fellows who are playing at home to do the same. After they have tapered off with a good cold shower, following the warm one, they can rub each other down. That's what most of us have to do here, for the rubbers are busy and don't pay much attention to any but the 'Varsity veterans. Get a bench down by the showers and stretch out flat on it. Have

the chap who's doing the rubbing use plenty of dope and plenty of "elbow grease" and rub and kneed you good from shoulder to heel.

These early days of practice, when we spend hours running up and down the field with the ball, don't mean simply condition and getting familiar with the feel of a pigskin. The linemen are getting some first lessons in the all-important art of charging. If we don't take the right position from the start there'll be trouble later. There is something to learn every day, and the player who doesn't learn it gets behind and soon loses out. It's a case of trying and thinking every minute. Learn how to do it right—learn how to do it best.

The linemen should stand facing the line squarely, resting most of their weight on their feet, which should be kept well apart so they won't be pushed sideways. Both hands should rest on the ground opposite the rear end of

the ball. The player should balance on toes and fingers so that when he lunges with his arms his whole body will shoot forward. Every player has been told to charge low,—but *do it, always!* The usual fault is to charge too high, but one may charge so low as to lose his balance and his effectiveness. Keep your feet, so that if your opponent gets over you you will not be thrown to the ground, but will have the power of your legs under you to lift him and fling him out of the way, thus opening a hole for the back carrying the ball.

Charge fiercely, but don't charge blindly. Keep the body low, but the back straight and the head up. Always, head up! Take a position where you will be able to watch your opponent, and the progress of the ball when the other team holds it. A good way to practice is to tie a string two or three feet above the ground (depending on the size of the

player) and charge under it for ten minutes each day. The boy who is ambitious to become a good lineman will do that at home before or after practice. Also he will put a heavy box or barrel on the other side of the string so that he will not only charge low, but charge with enough power to force it back.

In the ordinary signal drill we are taught to always crouch right, always start right and always charge and charge low. Every eye should be on the ball and the start be made the instant it starts to move. The start is as important to a football player as to a sprinter, so practice constantly for a quick start. The men in the line must charge together, as a unit, shoulder to shoulder. The backs, too, are learning to take the sprinter's crouch and get off to a quick, even start.

It is never too early to start a tackling drill, and we've been getting it betwixt and between

our other activities. Every day we are lined up at the tackling dummy, one squad at a time, and set to flinging ourselves at the swaying canvas figure. A coach is barking at us every minute,—I sometimes wonder what a coach's throat is made of—and the man who fails to bring the figure down with a snap draws a scathing rebuke. A fierce, well-timed dive and you hit the figure just below the hips, grasping the legs with your arms and bringing it to the ground with a snap. Fierce, hard tackling is what is demanded. Nothing languid goes in football.

All our tackling isn't on a dummy, as we practice on each other. The squad is divided into pairs and one man tackles another, turn and turn about. Get the Beechville players at that, Tad. Don't let them baby each other. When you hit a man with your shoulder, hit him hard and put him down for keeps. We'll get some longer tackling drills later and

I will write you more about the art when I've learned more. For now, remember to tackle low and tackle hard.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

I'm sorry to hear that Long Tom Bowser isn't back in school this year, and so won't be able to play fullback and do the kicking for Beechville. Tom certainly was a likable hulk, a valuable player, and a natural athlete, but he used to just whale away without thinking. He wouldn't have fitted in any too well with the kind of a team I hope Beechville is going to have this season. The material is light, but, as far as I know the boys, they're strong and active, and above all *thinkers*. I'm glad to hear that most of them are doing as you are,—reading everything they can get hold of about football, trying to learn by actual play on the field, and using their heads all the time. It's the player who knows and who has trained himself to think and act quickly who is valuable in football; and it is



"SWING YOUR LEG FROM THE HIP."

the mental as well as physical training that football gives that makes it a worth-while game.

Of course you must have a kicker. Pick a long-legged player with brains and make a punter out of him. Pick a solid, heavy man with steady nerves and make a place-kicker out of him. Keep on kicking yourself, but don't depend upon yourself alone. A team must have several kickers to be fortified against accident; and if every member of the back field can kick and pass, as well as carry the ball, the other team never knows what's going to happen next. And don't bar a man from kicking simply because he's a lineman; he can always be drawn back to kick, if needed. Practice kicking every day, Tad, but don't do too much any one day, especially at first, else your leg may get sore just as a pitcher's arm will.

The Old Fox has six or eight men punting,

three place-kicking and one fussing with drop-kicking. The punters kick back and forth across the field to each other for an hour early in the afternoon, always with a coach barking at them. A few backs who aren't kicking get in on the catching. I wandered over early yesterday afternoon to get some pointers to send to you. There were only a couple of punters out so early. A coach grabbed me.

"Here," he said, "you're long-legged. If you're interested, get into it till I look you over. What year?"

"Soph," I gasped, "but I've never kicked much."

"Well, you have time to learn." And he put me at it.

First he made me swing my leg, back and forth from the hip.

"That's it," he'd cry, "swing your whole leg, from the hip, and swing it clear through."

Then he showed me how to hold the ball,

straight out in front, lacings up, between outstretched hands, with the outer point of the ball slightly lower. Taking a short step with my right foot (my kicking foot) and a normal step with the left foot I dropped it so that it fell without turning, and caught it with my instep just before it reached the ground. A good, full swing helps, and the farther you can follow the ball with your foot the better. Kicking the ball a trifle on one side gives the spiral. I know you have much of the knack already, but see to it that you're holding the ball right and getting the fullest possible swing. Practice steadily for distance, and accuracy. Learn to kick low and hard into a wind, and high and far with a wind at your back. Learn to place your kicks so you can drop them where the other fellows aren't and they'll have a chance to travel farther.

Drop-kickers seem to be born rather than made, and I guess there aren't very many of

them born; but if any chap thinks he can drop-kick keep him at it. Keep the place-kickers blazing away at the goal during part of the practice, with the quarter-back candidates working with them. You must have the goals after the touchdowns, sure; and goals from the field often win games.

I don't think I'll ever make a kicker, as there are plenty here who are at it and I have too much else to learn, but I'm glad I had the lesson,—especially if it helps you any.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

I certainly am glad I went out for track last spring. Then I was most awfully sick of the daily grind on the cinders, when I'd much sooner have been canoeing, or on the tennis court. While I never covered the century much faster than eleven seconds, with a 57 as top mark for the quarter, when the regulars were doing under 50, now I realize that I was developing what natural speed I possess.

Now that we've begun to toughen, after a week and a half of work, speed is more than ever the cry of the coaches. If anything ever lands me on the 'Varsity squad,—and that's all I'm hoping for now—it will be the fact that maybe I'm a bit faster than some of the others who are just as strong or stronger and know fully as much. With thirty men seeking places in the line, I feel sort of lost. No

regular line-up has been divulged yet, but one can guess how things are looking by the way one signal squad frames up around Captain Bradley. Bellamy and Snow are on hand and looking fit enough as they line up in the tackle positions. Big "Bub" Hoskins, who played at guard beside me on the Fresh last year, and a Junior who was a 'Varsity sub last year, usually fill in between the veteran tackles and Lowe, for two years a star at center. That leaves your big brother to herd with the rest of the lesser lights.

I heard the coach telling the newspaper men that things looked good for a strong center five, but that he didn't have a great deal of end material in sight. Of course, it's too early for me even to get a hint of my fate, as we won't scrimmage for a week and there's no game till after school opens in October.

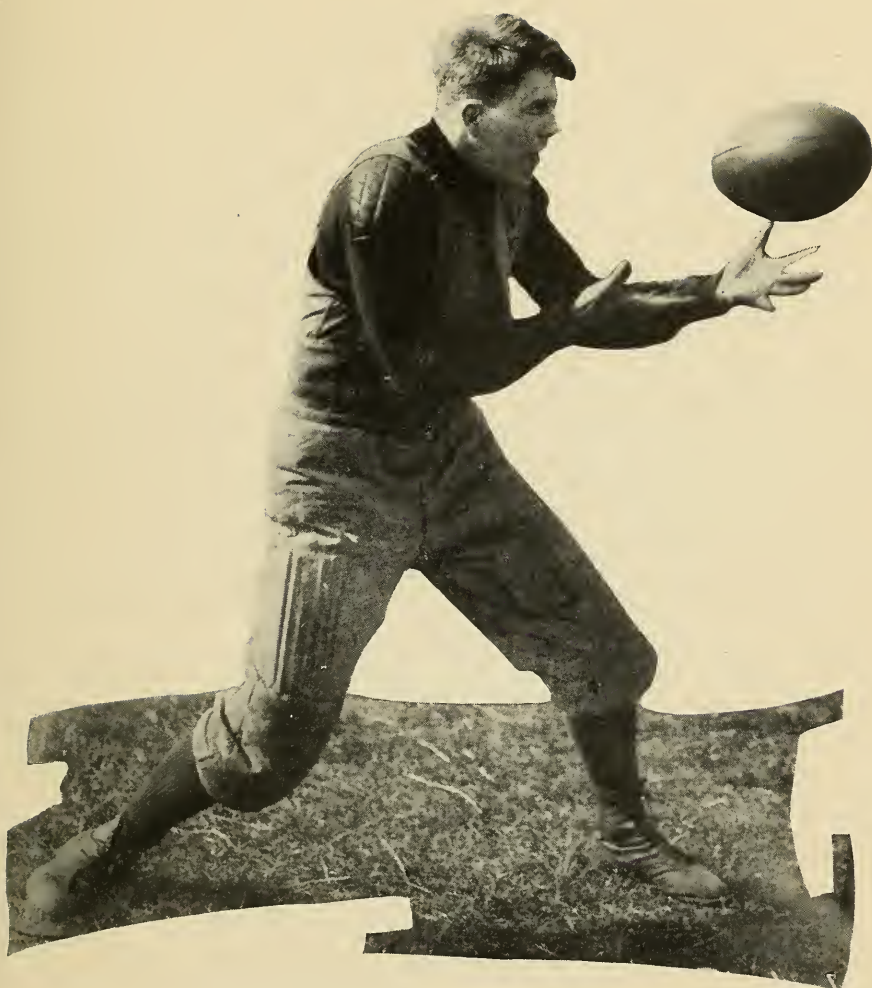
The only cheering circumstance was when I landed third in the up-the-field sprint for

tackles, guards and centers. They set us sprinting every day, short dashes and long dashes, and the tackles and guards seem to be expected to show as much speed as the backs and ends. Since I showed speed in that race the Old Fox has looked at me once or twice, which is encouraging. The coaches are certainly afflicted with the speed mania. Every man must show speed in every movement. In signal drill the lines must get away as fast as the back fields, and every man must keep sprinting till the ball is down.

Already we're hearing the cry follow the ball. Even I know enough football to recognize that as a primary rule, and I'm trying never to forget it. Keep your eye on the ball whenever you can. Work toward the ball, for that is where the play is. Always be in the play. They keep us thinking about this from the first, so that every man may train himself to be ever on the alert. To the man who holds

himself in readiness for instant action in an emergency comes success. The backs most often find opportunity to profit by always following the ball, but the lineman, once he has put his opponent out of the play, also follows the ball, ready to make a tackle, help his back or grab a fumbled ball. The team that has every player in every play and keyed up for instant action in any emergency is the one that gets the "breaks" in a game,—has what looks like luck from the stands. Follow the ball, *always!*

Pick a team, Tad, that is speedy, alert and game and you'll lead a winner. And see to it that every player is equipped to get the most speed out of himself. Every player must have cleated shoes to be effective. I know that many boys turn out with elaborate pads and head guards, and shoes with smooth soles. They can't get the quick start that is essential. If you can't afford regular football shoes, it



"THE OTHER BACKS GET PRACTICE CATCHING THE PUNTS."

doesn't cost much to have a few leather cleats nailed onto the soles of an old pair of shoes. But don't use heavy shoes or shoes that don't fit. Medium-weight trousers are the thing,—not heavy, stuffy ones. You almost never see a shin guard on a college field. They cut down speed. They are used only in cases of necessity as a temporary guard for an injured shin, never as part of a regular uniform. Get your body sound and don't depend on pads.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

The kind of signal system you adopt is not so important as that it is simple. Perhaps the system I'm going to suggest isn't so simple as it might be, but at least it's totally different from the one Beechville has used, and that's more than ever necessary now that Elkins has moved over to Loring and is to play with them this year.

As a general rule, you needn't worry about any opposing team smelling out your signals during a game, so don't be afraid of simple signals. Of course, a team that could learn your signal code in advance would have an enormous advantage, so guard whatever signals you adopt carefully. But never worry about the other fellow guessing your signals during play, and be sure that none of your team try to nose out the other team's code. In the first place it's dishonorable and un-

sportsmanlike, which is good and sufficient reason in itself. Besides, the player who thinks about the other team's signals has no time to think about the game and is pretty nearly useless.

We have just begun to get a few signals here on the 'Varsity and we'll have an entire new code before the season is over. Most big teams have a separate number for each play and use that number in connection with others to disguise it. Thus if play 104 is to be called for, and the third number called in the series is the key number the quarter will call something like 16-27-104-41-12. Any number in the series may be picked as the key number, the others being a meaningless jumble to prevent opponent's recognizing a play. The position of the key number may be changed at any time during a game by informing each of the players.

That system requires a good deal of mem-

ory, for no number indicates where a play is to go, and so every play must be remembered by itself. We had over sixty plays on the All-Fresh last year, but they tell me that the Old Fox gives the 'Varsity over a hundred plays before the season is over, which is some strain on the memory.

What I suggest is that you number each player and each spot in the line. For instance number the players thus: Left end, 1; left tackle, 3; left guard, 5; right guard, 6; right tackle, 4; right end, 2; quarter-back, 7; left half, 9; fullback, 11; right half, 10. As the center is never called upon to carry the ball from any position he need not be given a number. Number the positions thus: Around left end, 1; outside left tackle, 3; outside left guard, 5; inside left guard, 7; center, 9; inside right guard, 8; outside right guard, 6; outside right tackle, 4; around right end, 2.

Then if you have the third number called

in a series indicate the player who is to carry the ball, and the fifth indicate where he is to carry it, all the simple plays from ordinary formation may be readily indicated. If the quarter calls 42-86-9-4-4-11, the third number, 9, would indicate that the left half was to carry the ball, and the fifth number, 4, would tell all the team that he was going to take it outside his own right tackle (the opposing left tackle), and that a hole must be opened for him there. The position of the key numbers in the series may be changed at any time the signals seem to be becoming too apparent. Further secrecy may be secured by using a number whose parts, when added together, will form the number to be indicated. Thus in calling the left half in the above example the quarter would use as his third number 45, or 63, or 81, or any combination that would add up to nine. The same system may be applied to the position number.

Of course in football as played to-day, many special formations and special plays must be provided for. Suppose you use the first number of the series in which to indicate by number any special formation, if one is to be used. And you might use a number, like 13, to indicate forward pass plays. This should be used in the third position instead of the signal for the man to carry the ball, as a special formation might be used and would then precede it. Numbers following in fourth, fifth and sixth could then be used to indicate who was to pass the ball, who is to receive it, and where.

If you once understand the general system, Tad, you can work out the details to fit into any style of play. Adopt a set of signals now and get at them right away. That every player must know all of the signals is elemental; but make sure of the elements.

Your brother,

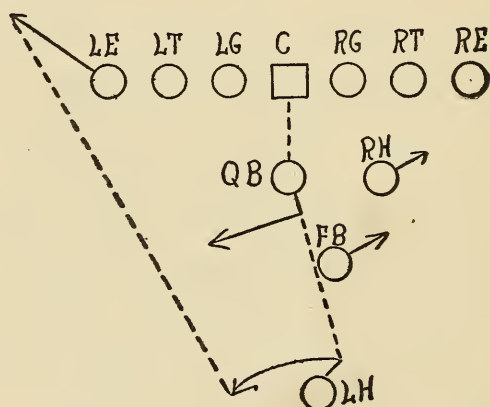
BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

Of course it's time for you to plan plays with that first game so close. The 'Varsity is just beginning to take up plays, but here the first game is still two weeks away. The university doesn't open till October and the first game falls the second Saturday of the month. They're not planning much for that game here; it's building a team for the big games later in the season that is occupying the attention of the coaches. We're still pounding on rudiments. Four teams are driving away at signal drill pretty regularly now, and I seem to have landed on what looks like a sort of a second team. Whether I'll fall lower or climb higher the future alone will tell. I'm hoping and trying my best.

I'll tell you about a little formation that can be used on all sorts of plays and that you can

add right now to the fundamental line plunges and end runs you have been practicing and the other plays that Beechville used last year. Possibly you can get it ready for the Coal City



Forward Pass From Fake End Run
(Figure 1).

game, if it looks good to you. I'm sending you a little diagram (Fig. 1) that may make it clear.

With the line in regular formation—three men on each side of the center—a variety of plays may be used. The simplest play would be a pass to the quarter and by the quarter to the fullback, who would make a dash off

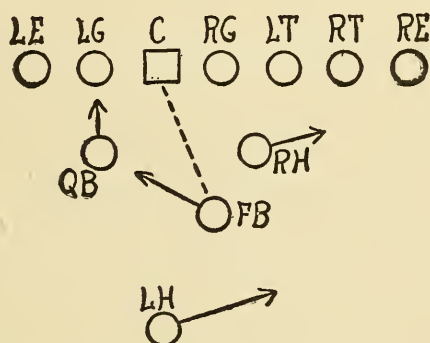
his own left tackle. The formation may be used on a straight quarterback run, the quarter receiving the ball from the center and endeavoring to get around the right end of the line, with the right half and full to furnish interference. One or two plays of that nature will convince the other side that the play is intended to go in the direction it is apparently aimed, and that the man playing back is merely being given a rest. Then let the center pass to the quarter, the right half and full dash to the right as though for an end run, but while the quarter appears to be going to the full, in reality he turns quickly and passes it to the man playing back. This back, on receiving the ball, runs a little to the left, with the quarter guarding him, and passes to the left end, who has sneaked into a clear spot under cover of the play, apparently going toward the other end of the line. In the drawing the solid lines show the course of the

players, the dotted lines the course of the ball.

A forward pass play may be used on the other side of the line, the right half and full both striving to get through with the right end, the quarter jumping to the left just as the ball is passed and allowing the ball to go straight through to the man back on a long direct pass from center. Or, the quarter may stand to one side at the start and the man back raise his hands as though to receive a pass for a punt. This always has a tendency to confuse the other team. Then the quarter can jump behind the center, grab the ball just as it is snapped, and pass it to the full for a line play or end run.

The same formation of backs works even better with a line shift as shown in the other diagram (Fig. 2). This formation puts an extra man on one side of the line and so gives more power to an off-tackle play, and off-tackle plays are the line plays that are being

largely used in present-day football. Of course, the opposing line will shift to meet your shift,—that is, they will if they know anything, and if they don't you can slaughter them on off-tackle plays and end runs behind the shift. If the opposition shifts you still



Cross Buck From Shift Formation
(Figure 2).

have a little the best chance on an off-tackle or end play. The forward passes may be worked in a variety of ways and directions. The play illustrated keeps the other team from being too sure of what direction your play is to take, and is a good one in itself. The formation looks like one for a pass straight back

to the left half, who stands with hands outstretched, and a pass, punt or run to the right is expected. Instead, the center passes to the full, who plunges into the line, to the left of his center, with the quarter ahead of him.

You can think out a great variety of plays from this formation. Sit down with some checkers and lots of blank paper and figure out your plays. Get the other fellows to join you in this and you'll develop team play, as each man can watch his own checker, learn just what every play means and what part he is to perform in its execution.

Remember that you can always shift your backs on this formation. If the full has been worked too hard, or you want to use him for a pass let him play back and the half take his place as second man in the tandem. This play is good because it gives you a chance to give light work for a play or two to a back who has been worked hard.

May fortune be with you on Saturday, Tad. Play them hard, tackle low, use your head and fight always. Give them a clean, snappy battle and, win or lose, Beechville will be proud of you.

Your brother,

BILL.

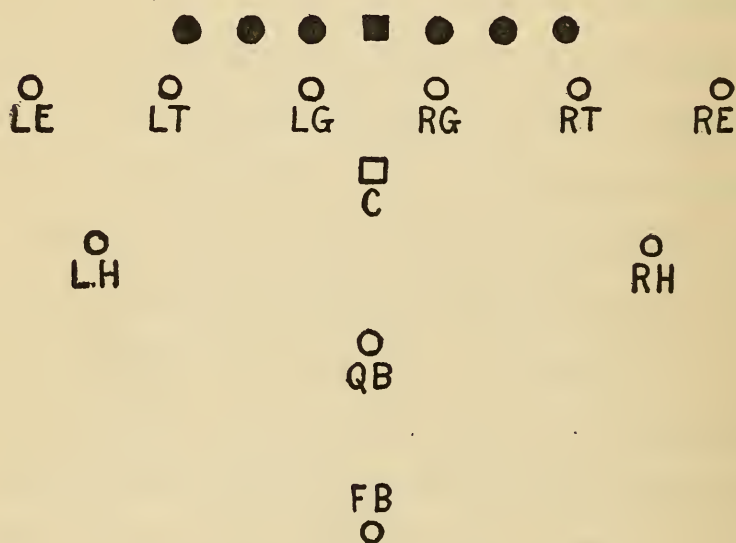
DEAR BROTHER TAD:

Just back from practice this Monday afternoon. I write post haste to tell you not to be discouraged, just because Coal City beat the team you led. I saw the score in the paper, but didn't realize how bad you felt till I opened your letter just now. A 20 to 10 score against a team from a school ten times the size of Beechville High is no disgrace. True, as you say, if this had happened and the other thing hadn't happened, and none of you had made mistakes, and all of you had played like you will be playing on Thanksgiving you might have won. The spirit that no one is too big for you is fine, but now that the game has gone remember that Coal City isn't in the county and the county championship is what you are after. I hope Beechville will be after the state championship some day, but it will

only be when the school board gives a better equipment, and the boys can find a real coach and an athletic management to equip a team and handle a schedule properly. Don't expect too much. It takes several years to develop a capable squad of football players in any town.

Learn from the mistakes that were made Saturday. Talk to the onlookers who know something about football. The line-men who didn't charge low and hard, who let their man through and missed tackles will have to go, or learn better. The backs who missed their signals, who didn't block, who didn't follow the ball, and who missed tackles must be improved upon. If every player will really profit by the experiences of the game, Beechville will have a dangerous eleven. Don't let the team sag or lose heart because of one defeat. Look ahead. Keep things snappy and peppery.

Make the defensive game your first care for a time, Tad. If you can develop a team the other fellows can't score on you can't get licked; and then you can pay more attention to the offense. I'm sending you a drawing (Fig. 3) of what looks to me like the best of



Defensive Formation (Figure 3).

defensive formations for general play. It doesn't leave many men on the line, but the line plunging game won't score any touchdowns against you if your tackles and guards



THE QUARTER BACK RECEIVING A PASS FROM CENTER.

are as skillful and powerful as they should be. The secondary defense men can always close up and stop line plunges, and posted as shown in the drawing they are in a better position to grab forward passes and spoil the other fancy plays that are most likely to do damage. If you meet a team with a heavier line, that gains much ground through your line, move the center and halves up close, but that ought not to happen with the teams in the county league.

On the defense, place the players where they will be most effective without regard to what positions they play on the offense. A man may well play offensive full and defensive end, offensive center and defensive tackle, or any other possible combination. The most successful teams are arranged differently when upon offense and defense.

First, you must have a pair of powerful tackles who can break up an interference and

stop a play. Each tackle has two men against him and he must have the strength to handle them and the speed and activity to cover ground. The positions of the guards, with a gap left between them, caused by drawing the center back, gives them responsibilities that are scarcely less. For defensive ends pick two men who are powerful as well as fast. They must smash the interference on all plays directed around their end, keeping always on the outside and turning in the man with the ball. The end must be fast enough to prevent the opposing backs running around him and strong enough to break through an interference. If he can break through an interference and get the man with the ball as well, all the better; but his first duty is to keep outside the coming play and turn the runner in where the half or center can make the tackle.

A really capable man, playing at center,

may make half the tackles. He can get in every play, whether it be through center or around the end. His duty is to keep opposite the play as it moves from side to side and plunge into it when it turns in. The half backs must come up and be ready to stop the runner on end and off-tackle plays, and with the quarter watch for passes and tricks. The duties of the defensive full-back who must handle all kicks with unerring accuracy and stop any back who may break through, are familiar. These four positions are the places for the lighter players; but they must be filled by men who are sure tacklers and capable of picking a pass out of the air from in front of an opposing end.

If the opposing team shifts, shift the defense to meet it. If the offensive tackle moves from one side of the line to the other the defensive tackle opposing him must shift so as always to remain opposite him, and the sec-

ondary line must shift across a little to keep the center of strength opposite the center of strength of the opposing team.

Scrimmages started Saturday and now the coaches are roaring over the faults that inevitably develop. I'm definitely on the second team, but grim, scrappy and hopeful. The 'Varsity squad will be picked next week. Help your big brother hope.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

'As I went into the field house this afternoon to get into my togs for practice I found the fellows crowded about a typewritten list that was fastened to the wall. It was the list we have been expecting and dreading,—the list of the 'Varsity squad. I pushed up within view and read it once in haste, and then again more slowly. My name was not there!

Of course it's a big disappointment not even to land on the squad, yet I suppose I hoped for too much in my first year of competition with scores of strong and able men gathered from all over the country at this great school. There were but twenty-one names on the list, so there are more than forty of us who fell outside. There still is some hope for this year, for the squad may be enlarged, or some of those inside may fall from their places.

Some of the fellows who didn't make the squad got sore and quit. I'm glad to say there were only two or three who turned in their suits and went home like very small boys who "won't play unless they can have things their own way." I'm going to play all the harder and learn as rapidly as may be to make myself worthy of a place, and to prove it to The Old Fox. It's good to be where you feel that things are run "on the square," where you feel that those in charge are picking the players on merit alone. But even if I felt that the coaches and captain hadn't been fair to me the only manly thing to do would be to accept the decision, stick, and fight all the harder to force them to recognize my ability.

So now I'm a member of the scrubs, a separate squad with a separate coach and different signals and plays. Our task is to furnish practice for the 'Varsity, and try and

learn enough to be valuable material some day. I certainly am going to endeavor to furnish a great deal of *practice* for the 'Varsity player who draws the spot opposite me in scrimmage drill. My task is to prove that I'm a good enough player in intellect and speed and power to be a member of the 'Varsity squad, and I'll plunge into it with jaw set and muscles tense, and "show 'em!"

I really don't feel half as sorry for myself as I do for Travis, a senior, who's been a mighty good friend to me. He was standing beside me when I read the list in the locker room, and I guess a few tears must have slipped into my eyes when the blow fell, for he reached over and squeezed my arm.

"Cheer up, kid," he said; "your chance will come. Just keep your nerve and your faith."

Then I read the list over again and saw that his name wasn't there either.

"But you've lost out, too," I said, "and you're a senior and this is your last chance, while I'm only a soph and trying for the team for the first time."

"Yes," he said, "it's tough to come down early for three straight years, play through two long seasons with the scrubs and then lose out on the last try. But I'm not through yet. The season isn't over, kid; keep on plugging."

As we walked over to the lockers together I thought of all the things he'd done for me, and all the plays he'd taught me.

"You've been mighty good to me," I told him. "You've taken a good deal of time out of this, your last chance, to coach me, and that when we're both trying for a tackle position, and when helping me was hurting your chances."

"Boy," he said,—he talks like he was twenty years older than I, though I don't be-

lieve he's four—"we're all out here to give the old school the greatest eleven that can be turned out. If we could couple my experience with your strength and speed we'd have considerable of a football player. I'd give a mighty lot to make this team; but the thing for all of us to think of first is turning out a winning eleven and worrying about personal glory afterward."

That's the spirit up here, Tad, and that's the spirit that makes football teams great and the men on them big in the finest sense of the word. Every individual must sink his own hopes and ambitions in the larger hopes and ambitions of his team. On the field the play must be for the team, not for himself. Team play is the absolute essential in football and it can only come when each makes himself a moving, thinking part of a splendid machine.

Try to inspire in every player the spirit of Beechville first. It takes self-sacrifice to

achieve gridiron success,—as it does to achieve any sort of success that must be reached by concerted action.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

We had one real scrimmage to-day, the last before the opening game, and while the coaches and 'Varsity players didn't get a lot of satisfaction out of it we scrubs did. The regulars worked all afternoon and only made one touchdown and The Old Fox was about crazy. For a time I faced the veteran Belamy, and he surely is one grand player. But I didn't let him through once and I certainly learned a lot from his play. A few times I got the jump on him and not once did he put me down and out. When I thought of winning a place on the other squad the strength of desperation surged in me and I crouched with every nerve and muscle tense and shot forward with the snap of the ball as though on steel springs. The Old Fox gave the veteran more than one

tongue-lashing for failing to open up a hole through me when the play was coming my way. But I'd just made up my mind that I wouldn't be put out and I guess that's the best way not to be outplayed.

The reason the 'Varsity couldn't gain was that the 'Varsity line wasn't opening holes. No back can gain when there isn't a hole open for him on a line play or where his interference hasn't cleared the way on an end run. The most important part of offensive football is, not running with the ball, but blocking. The responsibilities of the man carrying the ball are no greater than those of the other ten players of his team. The line-men must recognize their responsibilities in opening holes for the backs. The best back in the world can't gain if his line doesn't block and open holes.

On the offense if the signal calls for a play through his side of the line the duty of the



"THE LINEMEN MUST LEARN HOW TO BLOCK."

lineman is to put the player opposite him out of the play. If playing at guard, and the play is to go between center and guard, charge to the inside of the opposing guard so that you can swing him away from the center of the line. Thus an opening may be made for the man with the ball. The charge must be lightning fast, low and with tremendous power. Get under the opponent and fling him out of the way. If possible, slip your right leg between his two and with the side of your body against his hip and your other leg as a brace you fling him away from the play.

Pair off your lineman, Tad, and have them practice this form of blocking until they are adept at it, first one taking the offensive and then the other. The task of the player on the defensive is to avoid being blocked and to break through so that he may stop the oncoming play. If the signal calls for a plunge between guard and tackle, the guard, of course,

charges on the other side of his opponent and endeavors to fling him in the other direction.

The center, too, has his full share of blocking on the offense, his duties having only begun when he passes the ball. If his opponent is playing up close and the play is coming between guard and center he must fling him to one side. If the other center plays back and the guards may be depended upon to handle their opponents, the offensive center charges straight through to block the center playing back on defense so that he may be put out of play and prevented from coming up to stop the play.

The offensive tackle has his end to help him in disposing of the tackle opposite. When the play is to go inside a tackle a favorite trick is for the end to fling himself against the leg of the defensive tackle from the outside, keeping low, while the offensive tackle charges the defensive tackle from the other side and

flings over and out of the play. On plays outside of tackle the method of attack is reversed.

When the play goes to the opposite side of the line the lineman must check his opponent for an instant and then slip through and block some player of the secondary defense, so that if his back should chance to break through he may have a free field to the goal. In all blocking the player must be careful to avoid clutching or grasping an opponent in any manner or wrapping his arms about him since holding will not be tolerated by efficient officials and a heavy penalty will result. But a mere knowledge of the art of blocking, necessary though it be, will be of no avail unless coupled with low, fierce, powerful charging. Unless you get the jump on an opponent you can seldom reach him so as to block him effectively.

Keep the fellows at blocking drill, Tad, and

make the lineman realize their responsibilities. May luck be with you Saturday.

Your brother

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

When I wrote you yesterday I had a good deal to say about the blocking which the line-men must do when playing on the offensive. The more a player knows about blocking the better he will be able to avoid being blocked, which is his task as soon as he assumes the defensive. On the defensive the lineman must make continuous use of his hands to be at all effective. He must charge fast with arms outstretched and get his hands against the head or shoulders of his opponent. Doing this he can hold him at arm's length and avoid being blocked until he has determined just where the play is going. Then he must fling the opponent aside and plunge into it. If the defensive lineman can get one hand on the side of the opponent's neck and the other hand under his upper arm, the player so caught may be flung to one side with ease.

Don't let an opponent get under you. Keep your hands on him and keep him away. If your opponent charges so very low that he is practically on the ground, and so low that you can get your knee on his shoulder and neck he may be forced to the ground where he will be useless.

Don't, above all things don't, let your opponent force you back. Charge to meet him, and at the very worst hold him even. If you are boxed it is then necessary to back away quickly and not waste strength trying to break through. But, on the other hand, once you get a player boxed keep right after him and don't let him get away from you.

The defensive tackle, with two men to face, must never get caught between them, else he will be helpless. They both will be opposite him as he lines up, but he must charge to one side or the other and, getting his hands on the man closest to him, keep outside of them

and plunge into the play if it comes his way. This task taxes a tackle's speed and power and skill to the utmost.

There was no scrimmage to-day, of course, for the game is to-morrow. The 'Varsity squad was given a long signal drill and the way The Old Fox roared it sounded as though he didn't like the way things were going. While the game probably won't amount to a great deal as a contest it will be a test for the team and the players on the team. Would that I might even hope to get into it for a few minutes. But I'll watch as cheerfully and as carefully as I may and try to learn from what occurs.

It is probable that every man on the 'Varsity squad will get into the game to-morrow. That will give them all a try-out and show the coach what they can do. Using plenty of substitutes should be good policy for Beechville in the next two games. They ought to

be easy for you and there are many good reasons for letting the subs in. In the first place it saves the regulars from possible overwork and injury. But better yet it keeps the substitutes enthusiastic and interested, and no team can prosper without plenty of substitutes. You must always be ready for emergencies, and besides that the moral effect of a substitute sitting on the sidelines is considerable. If a player knows that another is hot after his job he'll try every minute in practice as well as in the game. He knows he must keep going at top speed and develop his powers to the utmost to keep ahead of the other fellow. If a team can be kept continually on its toes the chances of success are excellent, and encouraging substitutes is one way of doing it.

Now I'm off for the first mass meeting of the year. The whole school will be out to cheer the team, sing songs, practice yells for

to-morrow, and work up enthusiasm generally. A mass meeting is something that should never be missed.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

News! Good news! I'm on the 'Varsity squad. It all came so suddenly I'm not quite sure it's so yet, but I guess it's real. It came as a result of the first game,—not because I did anything, for of course I had no chance, but because some of those who had a chance didn't do anything either. Four men lost their places on the squad as a result of the team's poor showing, and five new ones were lifted up from the scrubs. I am one of the lucky five.

The change came when we turned out Monday afternoon for the first practice after the opening game. The Old Fox was still furious. He evidently had stayed hot clear through from Saturday afternoon when he was about the hottest man I ever saw. A 10 to 10 tie is certainly a bad opening against a

small eleven. The play looked rotten from the sidelines. The Collegians came down primed to play the game of their lives and make a showing,—which they certainly did. They played like tiger cats, while the 'Varsity, not counting the game as amounting to much, started out indifferently. Before the first quarter was over the visitors had scored, thanks to some slow and slovenly play, a fumble and about the rottenest tackling that ever happened. The fumble gave an opposing end the ball and he ran forty yards for what they call a fluke touchdown, but it counted seven points, and there is no excusing the fumble, or the sloppy tackling that let the runner get away. A couple of neat forward passes, a clever trick play and they were close enough for a field goal. Of course they kicked it and when the half ended the little fellows had us 10 to 0.

The 'Varsity started playing the second half

but the collegians had tasted of victory and played desperately. The third quarter was a thriller, full of real football, but the 'Varsity couldn't score. The last quarter was a heart-breaker. The 'Varsity hasn't been given any fancy plays yet, and the forward passes weren't working at all. Straight football made the twenty-yard line, but there the tired collegians stuck and Hunter had to kick;—result three points. The score was 10 to 3 against us with the final whistle but three minutes away. Condition and power finally told and the little fellows from the little school simply melted away. They had played beyond their strength all through the game and finally they gave out. It was just in time for the 'Varsity. They just managed to get the touchdown that tied across before time was called, and avert a real disgrace.

It doesn't pay to be overconfident in any game, much less in modern football. The

little fellows are likely to rise up and beat a bigger team almost any time by speed and fight and clever play. No team can afford to loaf, even for an instant.

Five men were tried at ends and none of them looked good. Now the coach has Belamy and Snow, the veteran tackles, out playing end. That leaves two tackle positions vacant and I'm on the 'Varsity squad. It looks like a real chance. I was in at left tackle for a time, but so were two others. One of them was Travis, who was lifted to the 'Varsity squad at the same time I was.

Bad as was everything else Saturday the tackling was worse. I've climbed onto the 'Varsity squad just in time for one thorough drill in tackling. The Old Fox has us flinging ourselves at each other or Susan Ann—as the tackling dummy is called—about half the time. Tackling is certainly a valuable

and a necessary art. The boy who can learn to tackle right has a great start toward developing into a real football player.

To be a good tackler a boy must have nerve,—he must be fearless. The player who hesitates, who shows the slightest timidity, is useless. It takes nerve to fling yourself through the air at a player traveling at top speed, but set your jaw and dive. Remember that the player moving the faster is hurt the least in a collision. The fierce tackle stops the man with the ball, and it jars him, and puts snap and confidence into the tackler and his whole team. The weak, slow tackle is usually a failure and the jar comes to the tackler. Put every ounce of your strength and energy into the last few steps before you spring to meet the oncoming runner. Your momentum must be greater than his if you are to break through his guard and fling him backward. Don't let him gain those extra feet

by falling forward. Run toward a runner; don't wait for him to come to you. Spring too far rather than not far enough so that you will break through the runner's stiff arm and not be pushed to one side.

To tackle successfully you must leave your feet. Dive headlong and bring the runner down. Just above the knees is the place to tackle, not around the neck. If the runner is coming straight toward you shoot your body toward him with the drive of your legs and he will meet a solid brace that will topple him backward. More often tackles must be made at an angle as the runner is trying to dodge around you. Dive for him, shooting your body across his path and grasping *both* his legs just above the knees with *both* your arms. Fire the player, Tad, who hasn't the sand to learn to really tackle.

I'm glad that Beechville came out so well Saturday. But don't forget that the bigger

and harder games are still ahead. Don't let overconfidence swamp you.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

If I die to-morrow one ambition, at least, is satisfied. I've played on a 'Varsity football team in a real game. True, it was only in the last minutes that I played, and then with the game an overwhelming victory, but they can't take from me the thrill I felt when I stepped onto the field and took a place on the team.

The second game of the schedule was pretty easy. The opposition wasn't quite as strong as a week ago, and the 'Varsity played some real football. The score was 21 to 0 when the first half closed and when the second half came they started to let the substitutes have a chance. One after another the subs were called from the bench. Every time The Old Fox turned to scan the bench I leaned forward a bit more and dug my toes

in hoping that he would notice me. Travis had gone in at left tackle in the third quarter. With the game about over and but three of us left on the bench I had about given up hope when the coach yelled, "Foster." I must have leaped ten feet toward him, and I had my sweater off when I reached him.

"Replace Travis at left tackle," he ordered. "Don't forget to report to the referee, keep your head, and don't get off-side."

Travis slapped me on the shoulder as I took his place. "Eat him up, kid, he's easy," he panted as he trotted away.

The visitors had the ball and it was first down. I crouched opposite their end with my teeth set and every muscle taut. With the snap of the ball I sprang against that end with arms outstretched, tumbled him against the tackle beside him almost before he was started, and was around them and into the oncoming play,—an attempted end run. I

flung myself head-first into the interference and I broke it up all right, for Snow coming in from end had a clean and easy tackle.

Right there I learned that pride cometh before a fall, for I was off-side on the next play, thanks to overanxiety, and we were penalized five yards.

"Don't do that again," snapped Captain Bradley.

"I won't," I told him. And I didn't.

They had to punt in a minute, and we pushed another score across just before time was up.

One of the assistant coaches came up to me in the field house after the game. "You played all right, Foster," he said, "after you settled down. But don't get a swelled head simply because you went in fresh against a weak and fagged-out team and made a showing."

"I'll try not to, sir," I told him.

Now that I'm on the 'Varsity squad I eat at the training table. We have a room back of a local restaurant and Andy, the trainer, sees to it that they feed us just what he thinks we ought to have and nothing else. We get lots of good red beef and mutton, but no veal and no pork. Coffee is another thing we don't get. There's chocolate in the morning and all the tea we want at noon and night. The small men are stuffed with milk, if they like it, but the fellows who are too fat already can't have that either. Sweets of all kinds are avoided and pies and pastrys are things we never see. Simple puddings and ice cream are the desserts we get.

It's mighty good to gather with the fellows three times every day, and it's good for the team. We get to know, and like, and understand each other, and things move more smoothly. Each of us pays the regular amount for board every week, the Athletic

Association making up the balance if there is a deficit because of special food and extra quantities.

Most of the coaches eat with us all the time and all of them do in the evening. After supper is over we push back in our chairs and The Old Fox talks to us. Sometimes he tells us of plays; often he criticises the work of the day. Almost every evening we have a stiff quiz on rules and on signals.

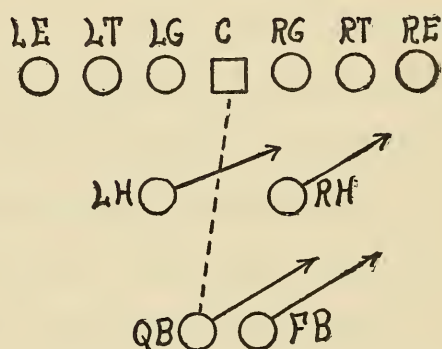
Those rule quizzes are mighty fine things and it would be a good thing, Tad, if you could get the Beechville players together—say every Friday night—for a long talk on rules. See that there are plenty of rule books at hand—they don't cost much—and get every fellow to study the rules. You're not a football player unless you know the rules.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

Another game has passed into the won column, but it was accomplished without my assistance. Not that I wasn't ready and willing—very willing. But they seemed to think that they could get along without me—and they did. I don't know whether I'm ever going to get a chance again. I'm just hanging



Box Formation (Figure 4).

on and working, a plain sub. I'm thankful to keep my place on the 'Varsity squad.

As I sat on the bench Saturday I noted some plays that you may be able to put to good use. The first sketch (Figure 4) shows

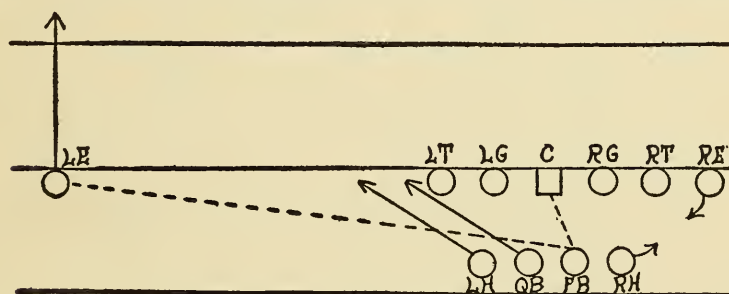
the box formation that is not unfamiliar in football nowadays. It is a good formation for a team to be familiar with. The four backs line up so that a pass from center may go direct to any of them. Any of the usual plays may be worked, as a pass to the quarter for a run around opponent's left end (as shown in diagram), a pass to the right half for a plunge through guard, or a pass to full-back for a cross buck through tackle. You can figure out as many plays for yourself as you care to use.

The old series play is still an excellent one. The idea is old enough,—to have three or four successive plays from one signal. Let us suppose Beechville has the ball somewhere in the middle of the field on the first down. The players are all in good shape and ready for a steady, concerted effort. You call the signal for the series play. First the left half drives through the opponent's left tackle on

a cross buck. Instantly the ball is down every man must spring to his place, and without any signal the ball is snapped and the quarter passes to the left half for a run around the opponent's left end. In the midst of this second play, the left end, instead of following the ball as he normally would on an end run around the other side, turns and sneaks over to the left sideline as quietly as possible. Here he lies flat just inside the side line. The end run has carried the play to the other side of the field. Again the team lines up instantly and the ball is snapped without waiting for a signal. The chances are excellent that in the heat of a series play, the speed with which the movements are executed will prevent the opposition missing the end. In that case the man receiving the ball from the center passes straight across to the left end who rises as soon as the ball is snapped and, receiving the pass, should have a clear field toward the

goal (Figure 5). The other backs should run to the left with all speed and block men of the secondary defense who might otherwise run across and cut off the man with the ball.

But suppose that the left end is noticed and the opponent's right end runs over opposite



Hidden End Trick (Figure 5).

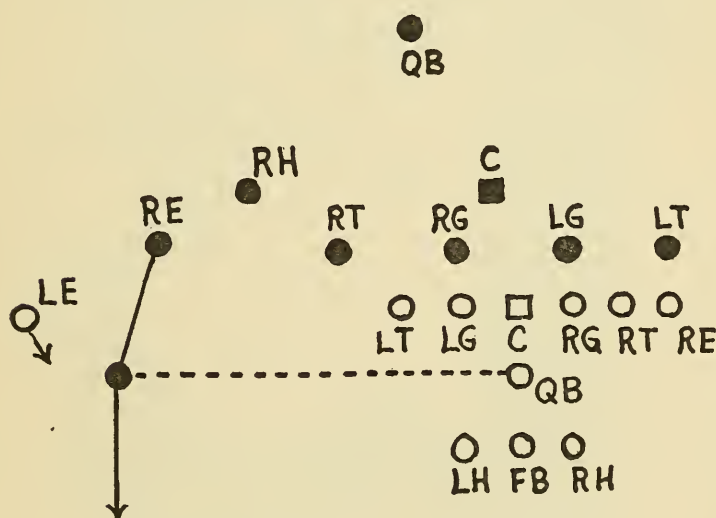
him. Then you should change your signals instantly and start an end run to the left. The opponent's right end is over by the side line watching your end and the end run has a splendid chance of succeeding if your left tackle is good enough to block his man without the assistance of the end.

The series idea can be worked with any

variety of plays. It depends on the quickness of the players in resuming their positions for its success. Long practice alone will bring it to perfection. Sending one end out for a distance is an excellent stratagem on ordinary plays, even when he makes no attempt to conceal himself. If he is noticed the other end is likely to keep opposite to him and so be drawn out of the play and a way opened for an end run.

The ends should know how to stop that play as well as to work it. I have drawn the defensive positions for you, Tad (Figure 6). The duty of the end is to keep his eye on his opponent every minute, and never to let him slip away. But if the end does chase across the field don't go as far as he does. Stop about five yards closer to the center of the line. The defensive half should move over and closer to the line to be ready to stop an end run, and the center and quarterback

should also move over a little to cover the spot left vacant. The end must keep his eyes open. If the opposition tries an end run he is still close enough to run in and help the



Breaking Up Long Pass to End
(Figure 6).

half stop it. If a pass is tried to the end who seems to be uncovered the defensive end has a royal opportunity to dash across, grab the ball out of the air from in front of his opponent and make for the goal.

I've told you a little of the possibilities of

sending an end out. Study it out from all angles and you will find that you can make a winner of it, Tad. I hope that it works fine for Beechville. Like everything else it takes study and practice.

Your brother,

BILL.



"HOLD THE BALL UNDER ONE ARM AND WARD OFF TACKLERS WITH THE OTHER."

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

You tell me that Beechville fumbled badly last Saturday, and assign that as the reason for the touchdown against you and the fact that you didn't win by a larger score. I'm glad—mighty glad—that Beechville won the second game of the county series. But there are other and harder games to come and the backs must learn how to hold onto a football. Perhaps I'm not much of an expert on that subject, but I got some drill while they were trying to make a fullback out of me on the All-Fresh last year and I haven't closed my eyes while the coaches were instructing the 'Varsity backs this season.

On line plunges the back should carry the ball in the pit of his stomach, grasping it with both hands and leaning far over it. It is easy to lose a ball in the scramble of line plunging

and it should be especially well protected. On off-tackle plays and end runs the back should carry the ball under the arm farthest from the threatening tacklers. Thus, in endeavoring to circle the opponent's left end, a back should carry the ball under his right arm. One end of the ball should be placed between the arm and the body with the hand grasping the other end. The ball must always be held firmly. If a player has circled the end or is running back a punt through a broken field he will sometimes have occasion to shift the ball from one side to the other as a tackler threatens now on one side and now on the other. Both hands should be used in shifting the ball, just as both hands should be used in receiving a pass of any kind. Both hands must be kept on the ball until it is safely tucked away in the proper position.

Carrying the ball under one arm gives the back an opportunity to use the other arm to

ward off tacklers. What is known as the "Stiff arm" is a valuable weapon for the man carrying the ball. The player who can use it effectively is particularly valuable and will get away from many tacklers who would otherwise bring him down. Meet the would-be tacklers with outstretched arm, placing the heel of the open hand against the head, neck or shoulder of the opponent. At the same time swing the legs away from the tackler, and slip around past him while thus holding him at arm's-length.

When tackled the back should fall toward his goal, thus gaining an extra yard or two. In line plunging the back must learn to pick the holes. The injunction to "hit the line hard" is an old one, but a necessary one. Step high when you run and keep your feet. Hit the line at full speed with head and shoulders low and back straight. A successful end-running back must follow his interference.

This is an art in itself. Keep about two steps behind your interference. If you are closer you will go down if the interference is spilled without a chance to dodge around. Never run back. If you can't dodge or stiff-arm a tackler go down. Don't go back, as that will only lose additional ground.

If a back fumbles a ball he should drop on it instantly. Never try to pick it up unless you are absolutely certain there is no opponent within ten yards of you. The all-important thing is to retain possession of the ball. It is bad enough to fumble a ball and so spoil a play; but to fumble a ball and fail to recover it is fatal.

Dodging is another of the gridiron arts, but it is a much-abused art and many backs lose more than they gain in efforts to dodge. Skipping back and forth across the field with tacklers lunging for you looks pretty and may bring cheers from spectators who don't

know football; but all that counts is advancing the ball. While the back with the ball is running back and forth the opponents are coming up and he will probably be thrown for no gain or a loss. A speedy, clever back who has proved that he can dodge in practice games may be justified in dodging. The plan that succeeds best in most cases is to plow straight ahead at full speed and trust to the interference, power and the stiff arm to break through tacklers.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

A county championship for Beechville High is surely a worth-while ambition. It means something to captain a championship eleven. It's splendid that you have made a clean sweep in the county so far; but remember that the real games, the hard games, are yet to come. You must beat both Corning and Stony Run if Beechville is to have a clear claim to the banner. Successes in the past do not insure successes in the future.

The team must do its hardest work from now on, both in practice and in the games. Put every possible bit of energy into the drills, Tad. Plays must be perfected and all the finer points mastered. It is finish, the mastery of every little detail, that counts when two evenly-matched teams meet in a championship struggle. Keep every player

hard at it and try to key yourself and all the others up to the highest pitch for the big struggles.

Don't let the substitutes lose interest because it is late in the season and they feel they will have no chance. Use them a good deal in the practice games—try to make them about as good as the regulars. It will keep the regulars on edge and you will possibly need a good many players in the two hard games to come.

Modern football is especially hard on backs. A team that can develop two sets of backs has a great advantage. At any rate I would advise you to give Simms some rest during the big games to come. He is a speedy, brilliant player—a treasure. Make the best possible use of him. If things are going fairly well for Beechville, if there seems no immediate chance of scoring, or a score is not needed to tie, take Simms out toward

the end of the second quarter. Let him rest all through the third quarter and start him again at the beginning of the fourth. Then he will be fresh and strong and ready to give his very best in a final, supreme effort to push across the winning score. Take advantage of the rule that allows a player to be put back in after he has been withdrawn. It allows you to get fresh substitutes into the game for a time and allow regulars who are light but fast to regain their strength.

Keep the thought ever before you that it is unity of action—team play—that counts. Every player must be at his proper place, in every play, every time. Drop the player who can't or won't do that, no matter what his individual ability may be. It is never too late to change. Some of the substitutes may have developed slowly, yet surely, and may now be better than a regular who has been slowed up through injuries or has gone

stale and accumulated a swelled head. The thinking, earnest plugger, who is at it every minute playing his hardest, always in his place, and always thinking, is the man you want. Put the premium on spirit, speed and intellect. Try to make the drills develop these qualities.

In planning your plays for the big games you must keep two things in mind—your opponents and your own team. Simple, yet easy to overlook! Don't take a play out of a book or article and try to use it unless you are sure it is adapted to the particular boys who play the positions with Beechville High, or unless it can be changed to fit your conditions. You have an especially speedy and clever left half in Simms. Plan plays that will utilize his ability to the utmost. Devise plays that will put the strong points of each player to the best possible use.

You know something about the Corning

and Stony Run teams and will have a splendid chance to learn more next Saturday when they play each other while Beechville is idle. Every Beechville player should be at that game, to watch, and watch carefully. There is nothing unsportsmanlike in studying an opponent's methods as disclosed in open games. Learn as much as you can of the general style of attack, and also of particular formations and plays. Try to see everything and remember everything. Let each man study his prospective individual opponent and learn his style of play. Then, when you have returned home, you may carefully and wisely plan for each of the coming games. A defense must be ready for each attack that is disclosed. Every trick play sprung must be learned and the way to stop it devised. Each must plan for himself the way to best handle the player who is to face him. Prepare your entire team for the other's play. If Corning

shows great ability at running the ends and seems disposed to depend on that method of attack station two powerful, dependable players at your defensive end positions. If Stony Run displays unusual ability with the forward pass strengthen your secondary defense.

Plan your attack against the weaknesses that you may have noticed in the defense of your opponents. Don't waste time and strength in plunging against a stronger line; develop an open attack. If you do notice a weak spot in the line prepare to puncture it.

'Also be prepared for the unexpected, Tad. Those other fellows will know you are watching them and will prepare something new for Beechville. Be ready for them. Keep alert and plan as the game progresses.

My big hope now is to win the 'Varsity letter. I guess I can hold my place on the 'Varsity squad now, though even that isn't

certain. Another game has been played and won without my assistance. There are but three ahead, and they are the three that count. I'm working harder than ever and hope I am learning and improving.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

The forward pass has proved successful for Beechville in the games that have passed. I hope you will make it work better in the big contests to come. Put in a lot of work on it now, Tad, for the time will soon come when you are likely to need it badly. You must have some good passes ready to spring when it is vital that you at least get within striking distance of the goal. One good pass, followed by a successful place kick will break a tie. Develop strength in all departments and keep a varied attack ready, but above all have the forward pass mastered.

In the first place you must have a player who can pass accurately and another who is quick on his feet and who can catch and hold a football. In baseball drill the pitcher and catcher work together constantly. The practice of the football players who are to handle

passes should be as constant. The end usually receives most of the passes. He must have the ability to get down the field and away from the opponents to a clear spot where the ball may safely be thrown to him. He must be able to get uncovered quickly and certainly. When the pass comes to him an opponent may be close on it ready to snatch the ball away. He must be capable of leaping high in the air to receive a pass, grabbing it from in front of another and holding it. He must be able to receive a pass on the run. A back is also eligible to receive a forward pass and not infrequently the opportunity arises, so that the back, also, should be familiar with this work.

The player who passes the ball must be able to throw the ball with absolute accuracy for considerable distances. A football is not the easiest of things to throw and it takes time to master the knack. The man who

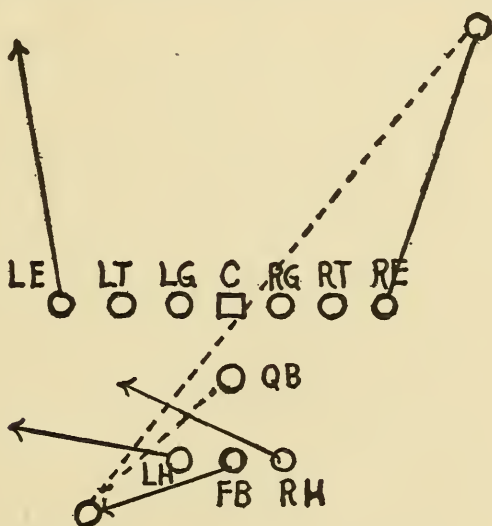
makes long passes must learn to shift the ball quickly into the palm of his hand, with the point forward and his fingers against the lacings. Don't swing the ball wildly into the air but *throw* it with somewhat the same motion as you would a baseball. Keeping everlastingly at it brings the results. The passer must learn to put the ball in the exact spot where his end is, or to some open spot ahead of him which he is sure his end can reach before the ball. Let the players work together day after day and there will be few incompletes in a game.

The passer must keep his head. He must avoid the opponents who threaten him as he would pass the ball. He must wait till one of his teammates who is eligible to receive a pass gets into the open. If no one succeeds in getting uncovered he should not pass the ball, but try to run forward with it, or allow himself to be downed. It is better to lose a

few yards and a down than to allow the other team to get control of the ball.

The ends and backs who master the forward pass will be better able to stop the passes of opponents when the other side has the ball. The success of a forward pass depends upon an end or back getting down the field to a spot where he is unguarded by an opponent. The task rests with the members of the secondary defense never to allow an opposing end or back to remain uncovered at a spot beyond their line. The defensive center playing back, the defensive quarter and the defensive halves must watch every opposing play and if an end dashes up the field one of them must get close to him at once and stay close to him so that he may intercept a pass if it is attempted. The part of the linemen in stopping passes is to break through and down the back with the ball before he can throw it. That is the surest of all ways.

I am sending you a sketch, Tad, of a forward pass play which I believe is a good one (Figure 7). The moment the signal is called the fullback turns and runs to the position



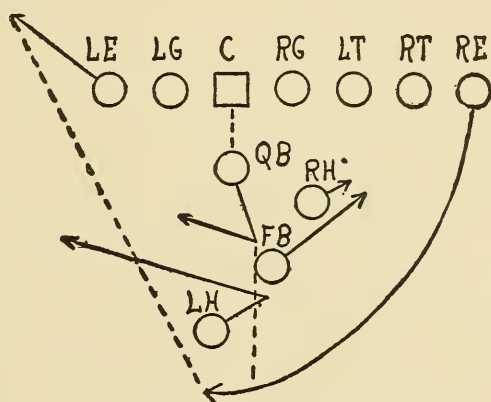
Forward Pass Play (Figure 7).

shown. Instantly the ball is snapped and the quarter, receiving the ball from the center, passes it to the full. The halves dash to the left as though for an attack on that side and so are in a position to protect the full from oncoming opponents. The full, protected by the other backs, waits until one of the

ends gets uncovered and then passes to him. As the play starts to the left, the right end would have the best chance of getting into the open without being guarded. If the defense opens up and falls back when the full-back runs back, the quarter can instantly change his signals, without changing the position of his backs, and shoot one of his halves through the opened line of the opposition. The next time the formation is used the opponent's line may stay up and then the pass can be attempted.

The forward pass play from fake end run is one of the complicated tricks that requires much work to master, but which is good to have in reserve for a tight place. The play is used from the formation shown (Figure 8), of which I wrote you in September. A line shift is used, the left tackle moving across to strengthen the right side as though for an attack on the opponent's left wing.

The quarter receives the ball from the center and pretends to pass it to the left half. The right half and fullback dash to the right as though for an end run. The right end



Forward Pass from Fake End Run
(Figure 8).

has turned with the snap of the ball and receives the pass from quarter, being guarded by the left half and quarter. He runs back and to the left a bit until he has an opportunity to pass to the left end who has run down the field.

Take these general plans, if they will help you, Tad, and work them over to fit your

needs and conditions. Go after Corning hard and trim them good.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

“Dixie” is a tune which always thrilled me, yet I never knew just what it could mean till I saw its effects on the Southerners, who were our opponents—and guests—yesterday. When the 'Varsity band played “Dixie” Friday night at the mass meeting, and again Saturday afternoon, the boys who had come up from the South to face us on the gridiron just about went crazy, and the wonderful dash and enthusiasm they showed, coupled with clean sportsmanship, made a game the like of which I never saw before. And I played in it, too, Tad, getting in at left tackle for the last ten minutes after Travis had weakened a bit.

The splendid spirit that may exist between two schools and two teams was admirably demonstrated during the past week end.

This was the first of the big games and about as big a game as this 'Varsity wants for awhile. The Southerners came in Friday morning, and Friday afternoon they were out at our field. The 'Varsity gridiron was offered them and they weren't afraid to trust us and accept it. The 'Varsity practiced on the outfield of the ball diamond, giving the visitors complete privacy. A string of seniors, stretched around the outside of the field, saw that no one went near them. It is one thing to watch an opponent in a game and another to spy on him at a secret practice. Good sportsmanship cannot tolerate the latter.

That mass meeting Friday night was a stirrer of hearts. The big hall was packed and the roar of welcome the visitors drew was proof they were welcome. The Dixie manager was hauled up to make a speech and he certainly made an enormous hit. He

was rather more than a trifle rattled facing those five thousand roaring rooters, and his soft Southern drawl, that sounds so attractive to our Northern ears, made his talk all the more attractive. He told us they loved us like brothers but that they had come up to beat us and so they would have to do it. That tickled the crowd, for that is the sort of sportsmanship that is worth while.

When the Southerners appeared on the field Saturday afternoon the 'Varsity band struck up "Dixie," and how those chaps did jump around, turning somersaults and hand-springs as they raced to their bench. The dash and spring of the visiting eleven when it took the field for preliminary practice showed the spirit of the men.

What a game that was! I crouched on the bench through the first half watching the fast, brilliant play. The visitors were naturally fast and their dash was wonderful. The

'Varsity, but a trifle heavier, and possibly not quite so speedy as a team, was tense and ready, springing to meet the charge of the Southerners with equal skill and alertness, else they must have been hurled aside by that attack, which moved with wonderful quickness and smoothness and yet with tremendous power. The visiting quarter, who was more or less of an all-around wonder, started trouble for the 'Varsity by running back a punt to our fifty-yard line. Then a combination of quick line plunges, end runs and successful forward passes sent the ball across for a score—but they missed the kick-out and so counted but six points. As it turned out that was mighty lucky for us. The 'Varsity didn't seem to be able to do much with the forward pass; but one worked in the second quarter and opened a chance. The off-tackle plunges were winners, thanks to good charging and blocking in the line. They won a touchdown



KICKING A GOAL.

for us and as Hunter, the fullback, kicked the goal the half ended with the score 7 to 6 in our favor.

The 'Varsity left tackle drew quite a pounding in the first half, and it was through him that the touchdown scored. I thought there would be a change there and was hoping my best, "Travis take left tackle," came the coach's orders as we trotted out for the second half, and I was again doomed to the sidelines. I realized that he feared the results of my inexperience in such a struggle, and yet I longed to get into it. At last my chance came after the visitors pushed across their second score as the fourth quarter opened. Travis had played his heart out and had drawn a bang on the leg that made him limp. He was jam full of fight and begged to stay in, yet he called a cheery word to me as I took his place.

I was sufficiently thankful that the big

Southern veteran opposite me had worn out two men before I drew the job of facing him. I set every muscle and nerve in the effort to master him and yet it didn't seem possible. We had the ball most of the time I was in, and were striving desperately for the touch-down that would avert defeat. He seemed to divine my plans for besting him and always got his hands on me and held me off. At least I prevented his breaking through, and a couple of times I blocked him back so that a play could slip past his station for a few yards' gain.

The breaks of the game came at the last with astonishing swiftness. Hunter fumbled, a Southern end was on the ball and things looked dark for us. They started a forward pass. Someway or other I broke through, for I had charged desperately, and I rushed for the back with the ball. He passed swiftly out and up the field. But Captain Bradley

was expecting just such a pass and dashing in front of the Southern end, picked the ball out of the air and started for the Dixie goal, seventy-five yards away. He didn't quite make it, but some line plays brought the score, and as Hunter kicked the goal we won by the margin of one lonely point.

It was a wonderful game to see, and a wonderful game to play in, Tad, and the best of it all was the splendid spirit of tense yet friendly rivalry in clean, vigorous sport. It was all an inspiration for me.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

I'm proud of you and proud of Beechville. That you should beat Corning was great! You don't say much about your part in the game, but give all the credit to Simms because he picked up a fumble and ran forty yards for the only score. Yet you must have used splendid generalship to keep that heavier team on the defensive so much of the game, and that without uncovering any of your fancy plays. The Stony Run team was watching the game, of course, and they discovered none of your choicest secrets.

'After all, the startling, unusual trick plays don't count for everything. You hear a good deal about them and they are spectacular; but the steady, well-directed attack that depends for its efficiency upon skill and speed and strength is really more dependable. It

is wise indeed to have trick plays for tight places, but don't place a great deal of dependence upon them.

You are now only one game away from the county championship,—but that one game will be the hardest test of all. Remember that Stony Run, also, beat Corning. The Beechville defense stood up well on Saturday, so you had best devote the days that remain to polishing the offense and getting into a condition—mental and physical—where you just can't be beaten.

The ability to block is probably the largest element in a successful offense. I have written you a good deal about line blocking, and the linemen *must* get their opponents out of the way. Back-field blocking is of equal importance. A finished interference is what enables a team to gain ground consistently. The runner must be protected from would-be tacklers and this can only be done by putting

those tacklers out of the play. Every back-field man should be a master blocker. The player carrying the ball may use his hands to stiff-arm tacklers, but the other players on the offensive are not allowed to use their hands and so must depend upon their bodies to get the way clear for the runner. The back serving in the interference should fling himself against the defensive end or back, whom he is assigned to put out of the play, and striking him about the knees knock him flat on the ground and keep him there. If the tackler starts to back away or side step so that you are not sure of hitting him with your dive spring after him, get your shoulder against his legs and hustle him to one side, keeping after him every second. Don't let him slip away from you and back into the play. Block him away from the play, toward the sidelines if possible.

The play should be planned so that each

player will have a certain opponent to put out, and he must assume that responsibility. When a play fails find out who got the runner. Do this in scrimmage drills as well as games. Then fix the responsibility for the failure on the player who failed to block the opponent who nailed the runner and spoiled the play.

Smooth out the wrinkles in that back-field until it can work as a unit. Of course you are all perfect on signals by now, but be more than that,—be perfect in your mastery of every detail of every play, and perfect in your execution of it. Start together, always. Make every start the start of a sprinter in a championship race. Spring with the snap of the ball. Get the jump on those chaps from Stony Run. Get them on the run and keep them there. Above all work together, hang together and never lose heart.

Avoid false starts. The backs must key

themselves up to dash in the direction in which the play is aimed, but don't give any outward indications of it by look or movement. The defensive players are watching for just such hints of where the play is going so that they may be prepared to meet the attack.

Practice, Tad, and practice hard. We are drawing drills, day and night now.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

Kicking in all its phases is one place to put a bit of emphasis these final days. If your punters and place kickers haven't learned their art by now it is, of course, rather late to teach them. But they must be rounded into top form so that they will be capable of top notch performances in the big game. Punting is very likely to decide closely-fought contests.

The center, too, has his part to play in the kicking, and it is an important part. His passing must be perfection if the kicks are to succeed. Now is the time for him to practice constantly and make sure that his aim is perfect, else a bad pass may cost the game.

You are familiar enough with the rules governing a try for goal after a touchdown. You have been practicing place kicks, but

have you been practicing punt-outs? It may happen that your score will be pushed across close to the sidelines, and yet you will want the best possible chance to score that seventh point. We had a vivid reminder last Saturday that the seventh point may be the one that wins.

If the touchdown was made at one side have the man who is the most accurate punter for short distances take the ball and stand behind the goal line at the point where the ball crossed. The backs should spread out to cover the field in front of the goal, with the linemen stretched across the field in front of them to block the opponents who may cross the line immediately the ball is kicked out and try to prevent its being caught. The kicker must kick the ball so that it will fall as nearly directly in front of the goal as possible and about twenty-five yards away. One of the backs must be under it when it falls,

and he must heel it—that is, dig one heel into the ground as he catches the ball and hold it there for an instant. Then the try for goal may be made from the point where the ball was heeled. The player who catches the ball must remember not to touch it to the ground, but hand it to the quarter, or whoever is to hold the ball for the goal kicker. See that the entire team get some practice in the kick-out so that each may know what is expected of him.

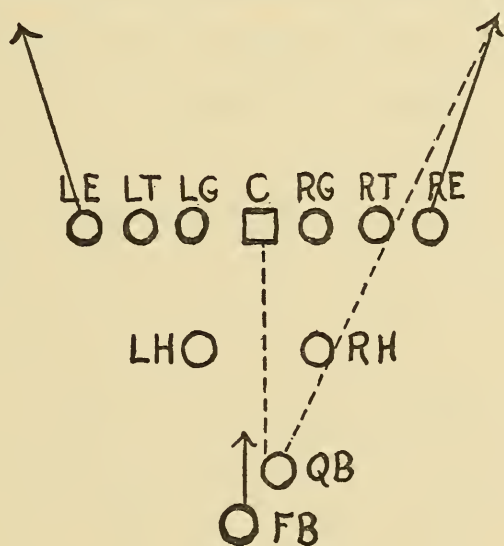
A goal from the field may be your only method of scoring, Tad. Every player on the team has his part to play in an attempt to score by the "air route." Each player in the line must block with absolute certainty in order that the backs may have a chance to do their part. This is a time when the line must block as a unit—make an impenetrable wall of itself. The linemen may well play unusually low and close together, even drop-

ping to hands and knees instead of assuming the usual sprinter's start position. Let the linemen hold perfectly steady, shoulder to shoulder and wait for their opponents to come to them. Thus the defensive players may be blocked with more certainty and the line protecting the kicker kept together. The two halves who back up the line must be ready to block any opponent who should chance to break through. The ends must get down the field, especially if the attempt for goal is made from a considerable distance, for it may fail to cross the goal line and be caught by the opponents and run back like a punt.

If you are stopped with the ball in your possession near your opponent's goal it might be good generalship, in some circumstances, to use a forward pass from the place kick formation, faking a place kick to deceive your opponents. Thus you may score seven

points instead of three. The play is an excellent one to have ready, and I have sent you a drawing of it (Figure 9).

The quarter crouches on the ground as



Forward Pass from Fake Place Kick
(Figure 9).

though for a place kick and the center passes low. The quarter even holds the ball close to the ground as though for a place kick and the kicker swings forward. But just then the quarter jerks the ball from in front of the kicker's foot and rises. If either of the

ends has gotten into the open a successful forward pass may be negotiated.

Now go after that Stony Run eleven, Tad. A Beechville team is just as good and a little better than any that Stony Run can develop. Prove it to them. Go after them hard, and to win.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

I am with the team in the east! After an all night and all day ride we are camped in the land of the enemy. Our "camp" is a hotel in a little city some forty miles short of our destination. We pulled in here Thursday afternoon and will stay until Saturday morning, when a special car will take us in for the game.

Tad, I have a real chance to get into the game Saturday. And where do you think? —at center! All day long on that Thursday ride I crouched in the aisles of the Pullman and passed a football back to LaChance, 'Varsity quarter, or to his understudy. When the train would stop at stations The Old Fox would hustle us out on the platform and set us to passing there. This is the result of a catastrophe that fell after the last practice on our own field. Lowe, the veteran center,

had stripped for the showers when he slipped on the wet cement floor in the field house and fell against a hot steam pipe, burning his leg and arm badly.

Armstrong has been subbing for Lowe at center, but Lowe is so big and powerful that no one thought a sub would ever be needed for him. Of course Armstrong would be the natural choice for center now, but still I believe there's just a chance that I will get in first and I certainly am doing my best to master the position and prove my fitness. They grabbed me because another man had to be ready for center. The Old Fox called me to him after supper Wednesday evening and quizzed me about the rules and plays. How glad I was that I had tried to master every detail of every play. I knew where the ball went for every play.

"Did you ever play center?" he finally asked me.

"Part of one game on the Fresh last year; once in high school; and I've passed the ball a good deal at practice this year," I told him.

"Do you want to play center?" was his next question.

"I want to do anything you need me for," was my answer.

"Do you think you can play center?" His eyes were boring into me. "Remember a mistake in the pass may cost the game!"

"I believe I can do it, sir. I'll give all I have, and I'll try to keep my head."

"That's the spirit," he said. "Remember if you do get in in the east you will face an All-American center. You must be ready to do your best."

The entire 'Varsity squad made this trip, so I would have gotten here anyway; but this gives me a new and better chance to get into the game. I'm mighty sorry for Lowe, especially as it hurts the team so. If I get

my chance I'll do my best and hope that it will be a pretty good best.

All this Friday morning I have passed the ball. Armstrong was at center most of the time during the very light practice we had yesterday, but I got in for a bit in a thirty minutes' signal drill this morning. After that we hired tallyhos and went for a long drive through this beautiful country. The coach talked football to us all the way down on the train, and now he is giving our minds a rest, except when we are at actual signal drill.

A crowd of Eastern rooters came out this morning and watched our drill. We had no place for secret practice. So this afternoon the coach announced that we should just take a walk. We had our street clothes on so nobody followed us. When we were about a mile out in the country we found a level pasture and the coaches produced some balls and

set us at a signal drill. I was mighty glad to actually make the passes on the fancy plays.

To-morrow may bring my big chance. I'm hoping for it, yet mighty nervous about it. Your big game comes to-morrow, too. I'm thinking of you, and pulling for you.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

This is a cheerful day for letter writing! To be able to congratulate a brother who has led his team—my old team—to a county championship is best of all. The pennant is Beechville's, and I can't tell you how glad I am. The game with Stony Run must have been a wonder. You scored your touchdown by steady, consistent football, and the margin of one point over their two field goals gives you a clean win that you may well be proud of. I certainly am proud of the part you must have played in that contest, and I know the town is proud of you and your team.

Another thing that I can be happy about is that I can write you that I did get into the big game in the east, and at least didn't disgrace myself. Armstrong started after all,

and played clear through the first half, while I lay wriggling all over with excitement, hope and dread. He really played a good game, but one bad pass that spoiled a promising play at a crucial point gave him a black eye with the coach.

The first half ended without a score. I never saw a more spectacular contest. Our 'Varsity would rush the ball up the field a way, only to be forced to punt. Then the Easterners would hustle it back a way; and then they would have to punt. The punting duel through that first half was a wonder. Hunter was sending out long, high spirals that covered sixty yards apiece. Once he put an extra ten yards on his drive and the ball got over the head of the Eastern backs and rolled almost to their goal line. Playing from behind their own goal they covered twenty-five yards on three splendid plays and then kicked the ball out of danger.

Their wonderful quarter did some punting of an unusual sort. His kicks covered scarce thirty yards in the air, but they went like rifle shots, low and hard. The ball would hit the ground on its point and go bounding along at terrific speed. Our backs had to play away back for them and take them on the bounce, as a shortstop would field a high bounder. One never could tell which way the ball would bounce, so those queer kicks covered fully as much distance as Hunter's, and were harder to handle.

What a talk the coach did give us between halves, and then came the word, "Foster, take center!" that set my every nerve on edge.

Well, I kept my head, I guess, for I didn't miss any signals or make any bad passes. It was a hard, terrific contest, but I lasted through it in good shape. The coach didn't trust either Hunter or me to play center on defense, but put us at guard. I had a hard

enough time of it there. They didn't make much ground through me, and I made no awfully bad mistakes. I just wouldn't spoil my chance; I just *wouldn't* let the man opposite me best me. The speed of the charges was tremendous, but some way I managed to keep up.

The game ended a tie, without a score. We had three chances that last half, and twice we crossed their goal line, only to have both plays called back. Once a forward pass worked like a charm, yet Bellamy, who received the ball, stepped outside with one foot in dodging a tackler and the score didn't count. The other play failed because of holding in the line—I'm mighty glad I wasn't the one to hold that time.

The final contest at home yet remains and my hopes now center on that. I'm sorry you hurt your ankle—especially sorry since you can't get down to see the last game. You've

had success and glory to make you happy this season, Tad. Now hope that your brother gets into the last big game, wins his letter and a regular place.

Your brother,

BILL.

DEAR BROTHER TAD:

My dream of the first day didn't come true exactly as I dreamed it, yet the important part did. When the 'Varsity trotted out from the field house onto the gridiron, your brother Bill was among them—the first choice for 'Varsity center in the big home game. The big red team had come down to face us in our own haunts, and the stands were packed with twenty thousand cheering partisans. The cheer the rooters gave us was an inspiration. I felt that nothing could stop me. It was no longer a question of keeping up with the others, as it was in my first big game. I was ready to go out and set a pace of my own.

Yet when the first half ended the count was six to nothing against us. The coach hustled us into the field house and there went

over us one by one, pointing out our faults and our mistakes and delivering exhortations for the second half. He didn't curse us, or call us dogs or curs or any of the other things that a coach is generally supposed to do to a losing team between halves. He stated our shortcomings and pointed out the way to improvement, he pleaded with us to go out and win for the sake of our captain and the university. He is one splendid, lovable gentleman, and we knew that we just had to win for him!

"Who are they, that they should beat you?" he queried. "They're nothing but men—they have no charm. They're no stronger than you, nor are they any better men. The team with the greatest spirit will win; where's your spirit? Go out and win!"

Bradley, the captain, was on his feet. "Boys," he said, "we all tried to play football last half; but we can do better this.

They can't beat us if we won't let them—and we won't let them. It is my last game, and Bellamy's and La Chance's, and Hunter's. And here's Travis, another senior. He's going in this half at tackle, the last chance he'll ever have. It's the last game any of us can ever play. We want to look back upon it as a victory, and we want the rest of you to help us, for our sake and for the university. Then there's the man who has guided us and taught us. Let's prove to him we are worth his effort. His reputation is at stake, as well as our own reputations and our school's. Lowe is sitting on the sideline's, his arms blistered. He's a senior. We must win for his sake also. Now come on out and beat them, fairly, squarely, cleanly."

And we did. We just wouldn't let them stop us. We put two touchdowns across before the final whistle blew and left the field on the shoulders of the rooters.

And so, Tad, the 'Varsity letter is mine. Lowe graduates, and I can start next season as a 'Varsity veteran.

One more good thing I have to tell you, Tad. Marx, the ineligible who refereed the Beechville-Stony Run game last Saturday, evidently had a long talk about it with The Old Fox. The coach came to me after the game to give me a word of praise and he asked about you.

"Wasn't that your brother who played quarter at Beechville this year?"

"Yes," I told him.

"Well, I hear he's a great deal of a quarter-back. Coming up here, isn't he?"

"Yes; next year," I told him.

"That's the stuff. If he has the stuff they say he has, and if he works and learns like you did, year after next we'll have two Fosters on the 'Varsity, one a center and the other a quarter."

Fine, brother mine. Our greatest days are yet ahead. I'll spend Christmas vacation out in the barn passing to you; and you're going to be the greatest quarter there ever was.

Your brother,

BILL.

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